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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [EAID](#) [IS](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PRM'S COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH SEEDS OF PEACE

REF: A. KRANTZ-KANESHIRO E-MAIL 06/18/05

- [B.](#) KANESHIRO-WARD E-MAIL 01/27/05
- [C.](#) KIRBY-KANESHIRO E-MAIL 12/17/04
- [D.](#) 04 AMMAN 1721
- [E.](#) 03 AMMAN 1477

Classified By: CDA Christopher Henzel for Reason 1.4 (d)

[1.](#) (U) Following is a monitoring and evaluation report for PRM's \$100,000 cooperative agreement (SPRMC004GR131) with the non-profit organization Seeds of Peace, which is designed to extend that NGO's conflict resolution program to Palestinian refugee youth residing in the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza. Seeds of Peace (SOP) has been implementing similar agreements for PRM since 2002.

SOURCES

[2.](#) (U) Per refs A-B, Amman-based regional refcoord met Seeds of Peace's Jerusalem- and Ramallah-based program managers and staff at their East Jerusalem offices (i.e., Seeds' "Jerusalem Center for Co-Existence") three times between September 2004 and July 2005 to monitor SOP's three PRM-funded sub-programs:

-- On January 26-27, refcoord reviewed the management turnover SOP is undergoing in its Jerusalem office and its related decision to alter the year-round activities it organizes for former summer camp participants from its Jerusalem Center with partial PRM funding (see paras. 5-7 for details) with interim Jerusalem Co-Existence Center Director Timothy Wilson and former Co-Existence Center Administrative Director Dr. Reuven Barneis, whom Wilson has retained as his private consultant. (NOTE: SOP has also retained Wilson in his former position as Director of SOP's summer camp facility in Otisfield, Maine. As explained in para. 8, Wilson has been absent from Jerusalem since March due to health problems. Senior Program Officer Ariel Huler was appointed Deputy Center Director in February and has been acting as Center Director in Wilson's absence. END NOTE.) She also reviewed SOP's three PRM-funded sub-programs with the following staff responsible for day-to-day implementation: Center Supervisor Sami Al Jundi, who recruits Arab and Israeli youth to participate in the summer camps SOP operates in Maine, SOP's "Olive Branch" Magazine Editor Seth Wilkis, who has overseen this NGO's two-year-old effort to create an Arabic-language publication, senior program officer Ariel Huler, who has retained responsibility for implementing the traditional follow-up seminars SOP organizes for former Israeli and Palestinian campers, and new staff members Lena Yehia and Zaqloub Said, whom Wilson hired in late 2004 to develop a new community service/outreach program for Jerusalem and West Bank refugee camps using current PRM funding (see para. 7).

-- Refcoord reviewed PRM-funded activities again with Huler, Al Jundi, Wilkis, Yehia and Said again on May 12.

-- Refcoord carried out a final monitoring visit on July 21, meeting with Huler, Al Jundi and Wilkis to focus on SOP's unexpected request for a no-cost grant extension (para. 4).

[3.](#) (U) In addition to these visits, refcoord met William Millsap, a consultant with the Reston-based firm Social Impact who is conducting for USAID the first systematic survey of attitudinal

change among Seeds participants, on January 27 to review his findings on SOP targeting/management in Jerusalem. She also met UNRWA Education Department Director Kabir Shaikh and West Bank Field Director Anders Fange at UNRWA's Amman HQ on June 14 to review SOP's coordination and the potential overlap between SOP's PRM-funded programs and the new PRM-funded phase II "tolerance project" UNRWA is implementing in its West Bank and Gaza schools. Due to limited security escort availability, refcoord failed to carry out a planned site visit to evaluate the new SOP community service activities in or near refugee camps in Jenin, Ramallah and Shufat Camp in East Jerusalem.

OVERALL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE

14. (SBU) As was the case with its previous two PRM agreements, SPRMCO04GR131 calls for Seeds of Peace to increase the number of Palestinian refugees attending the three-week summer camp sessions it started organizing in the U.S. in 1993 to teach tolerance and conflict resolution techniques to youth from the Middle East, and to secure their participation in the year-round follow-up activities its Jerusalem Center for Co-Existence organizes for former campers' until they reach age 24, through a joint-funding arrangement (currently 125,000 from PRM and \$25,000 from private donors). SOP's camp recruitment access problems eased as a result of the improvement in the political situation that followed the February 2005 meeting between Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Sharon and the subsequent cease-fire. The PA lifted its three-year-old boycott of Seeds of Peace shortly after the Sharm el Sheikh meeting, enabling SOP to resume working with the PA Education Ministry to recruit campers. As a result, SOP was able to recruit refugee youth from Gaza for the first time in its history -- a long-time program goal. (COMMENT: In 2001, when PRM first started funding SOP's refugee recruitment efforts, SOP was only able to identify and secure travel permits for refugees who held Jerusalem IDs. In refcoord's view, SOP could overcome its access problem and improve targeting of refugees further if it included UNRWA officials in its selection committees. END COMMENT.)

15. (SBU) However, the extensive permit system and network of road blocks and checkpoints that limits the movement of Palestinians -- combined with former Palestinian campers' continued reluctance to participate in activities held at SOP's Co-Existence Center in the French Hill area of Jerusalem -- has perpetuated the access issues that have made it difficult for SOP to effectively implement follow-on activities over the past two years (refs. D-E). As it did in 2004, SOP responded by supplementing the four joint Israeli-Palestinian seminars it was able to schedule (as of July 30) with additional "uni-national" activities in Ramallah. However, its new management team decided in late 2004 to shift the majority of the \$34,870 PRM has provided to secure the participation of 80 refugees in SOP follow-up courses into a new refugee camp service/community outreach program in February (ref. B).

16. (C) SOP has left the design of new programming based in refugee camps to new local staff who have no prior experience working with Palestinian refugees due to the unexpected absence of the Jerusalem Center Director for the past five months. Their reliance on local NGOs and UNRWA community-based organizations for access has diluted the co-existence content of PRM-funded follow-up programming. While SOP's new refugee camp-based activities could facilitate SOP's summer camp recruitment by providing supplemental English language training to refugee youth (a key SOP selection criteria) and by overcoming community distrust of SOP as a U.S.-based organization, its approach could potentially duplicate services that UNRWA and other NGOs provide. Lack of managerial oversight (combined with inadequate Arabic language capacity among its editorial staff) also appears to account for the problem SOP continues to have finalizing its third PRM-funded subprogram: publishing an Arabic-language youth magazine. Nine months into

its second year of funding, SOP has limited its production goals to one edition. Although it has entered into discussions with UNRWA to introduce the magazine in its schools, it has yet to secure a distribution agreement.

SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

17. (C) SUMMARY: As of July 21, SOP had fully met one out of the three objectives contained in its current agreement: it increased the number of refugees in its summer camp program in Maine from 12 to 17. On May 28 (ref. A) Jerusalem-based SOP staff informed refcoord that SOP would need a no-cost extension through September 2005 to meet its second objective of producing/distributing a youth magazine in Arabic. In late 2004, SOP significantly altered the content of its follow-up program (its original proposal was to include 80 refugee youth in year-round co-existence courses). In addition, SOP maintains no database that can identify whether participants hold refugee status, making it difficult to confirm whether SOP has met its final, original objective. Since February 2005, SOP has provided remedial English-language courses and communication workshops to at least 80 refugee youth, but these courses are aimed at facilitating SOP's recruitment for its summer camp program and have no direct tolerance/co-existence focus. A summary of the specific activities SOP performed between September 2004 and July 2005 follows:

OBJECTIVE A - 17 REFUGEES ATTEND SOP'S MAINE CAMP
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As it originally planned, SOP has used partial PRM funding (i.e., \$49,300 to finance the selection process and the participation of campers in a three-day pre-departure seminar) to help it expand the number of refugees attending its Maine camp from 12 in 2004 to 17 in 2005. Of the 80 Palestinians SOP recruited this year, 17 appear to hold refugee status (two are from UNRWA's Shufat Camp in East Jerusalem, three are from Jenin Camp, one is from Bethlehem's Deheisheh Camp, and 11 are from Rafah Camp in southern Gaza). (NOTE: SOP does not use UNRWA registration to verify the refugee status of its participants. Instead it uses residency in UNRWA camps as its working definition of a refugee. Al Jundi estimated that an additional 15-17 Palestinian participants living outside UNRWA camps could be registered refugees. END NOTE.) All 17 received Israeli travel permits and participated in the sessions that ended August 9. In addition to meeting its numerical target, SOP met its long-standing goal to recruit refugees from Gaza this year. Center Supervisor Al Jundi attributed this to the PA's agreement to lift its boycott of SOP, and the particular support of PA Minister Dahlan, who served on SOP's Gaza selection committee along with the PA Education Ministry representatives. Para. 13 describes SOP's selection criteria/process.

OBJECTIVE B - PRODUCTION OF ARABIC MAGAZINE
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PRODUCTION DELAYS: SOP's current agreement provides an additional \$8,000 to assist SOP in finalizing production of its first Arabic-language youth magazine. Under its FY 03 agreement, SOP received \$20,000 in PRM funding to produce Arabic translations of SOP's quarterly English-language "Olive Branch" magazine for one year. During her January monitoring visit (ref B), refcoord learned that SOP Editor Wilkis had been forced to halt production in late 2004 after Palestinian staff at the Co-Existence Center objected to the poor quality of the Arabic-language translation, which Wilkis (a non-Arabic speaker) had reportedly out-sourced to an Israeli firm using the full \$20,000. Given limited remaining funding, Wilkis told refcoord in January that he had abandoned SOP's original plan to produce quarterly Arabic translations in favor of producing one "best of" edition, aimed at a ninth-grade audience, by March 2005, with the aid of four volunteer former campers. On May 28, SOP Jerusalem informed refcoord that it would seek a no-cost extension through September 2005 to finalize production. Huler explained during refcoord's July monitoring visit that some original contributors had

voiced objections to re-printing their articles. However, Wilkis informed refcoord on August 14 that the "best of" edition had been finalized and would be sent to the printers on August 18. (NOTE: A copy has been pouched to PRM/ANE. END NOTE.)

DISTRIBUTION STATUS: Ref D reported that SOP planned to distribute its Arabic language magazine to schools in the West Bank and Gaza through UNRWA and UNDP. However, SOP has not yet pursued distribution with UNDP and is still in the process of securing the cooperation of UNRWA. UNRWA HQ Education Program Director Kabir Shaikh told refcoord June 14 that UNRWA continues to have concerns about its content. On August 14, Wilkis informed refcoord that he had secured the provisional agreement of the UNRWA West Bank Field Education Director to distribute the magazine in its schools. However, Wilkis is planning to leave SOP in September, and has indicated that he is turning over responsibility for finalizing SOP's distribution plan to his successor. Huler told refcoord July 21 that it was unlikely SOP would start recruitment for a new magazine editor before September, when Wilson is scheduled to return to the region.

OBJECTIVE C - 80 REFUGEES ATTEND ONGOING COURSES
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TRADITIONAL CO-EXISTENCE ACTIVITIES: SOP's original proposal was to include 80 refugees in the follow-up co-existence courses it organizes through its Jerusalem Center. SOP is facing increasing difficulty securing travel permits, but it has managed to maintain the joint Israeli-Palestinian seminar program it restored in 2003, scheduling three ongoing discussion groups for Jerusalem residents focused on film, language and culture and media out of its Jerusalem Center. It also scheduled an intensive dialogue session for its former 2003-2004 year campers in Nevit Shalom in December 2004, two seminars on civil rights and education issues in Tanteu in February and June 2005, and one lecture on the current political situation with a panel of Palestinian and Israeli officials and journalists that included Saeb Erakat. As was the case in 2004, SOP supplemented these joint meetings with two "uni-national" seminars for Palestinians on the PA elections and co-existence issues in Ramallah this year. However, SOP has not used PRM funding to deliberately target the participation of former campers' with refugee status, and thought the numbers of refugee participants were likely to be low during refcoord's three monitoring visits. (NOTE: SOP's current database does not permit it to track its summer camp and/or seminar participants by refugee status. SOP's past calculation that 50 percent of participants in its follow-up courses have been refugees was based on the fact that roughly half the population of the West Bank are registered refugees. END NOTE)

NEW CAMP-BASED COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES: Since February, SOP has used the bulk of the \$34,870 it requested to secure the participation of refugees in its follow-on programming to instead implement new community outreach activities targeting refugee communities in East Jerusalem, Ramallah and Jenin. Unlike its aborted 2003-year program (ref D), SOP hired two new full-time staff in October/November 2004 (using non-PRM funding) to develop separate trial programs for Jerusalem and the West Bank focusing on UNRWA's Shufat Camp in East Jerusalem and refugee camps/communities in the Ramallah and Jenin areas. Both programs have centered on SOP's summer camp recruitment by promoting the English language and communication skills that remain SOP's core selection criteria. As of June 21, SOP had conducted 40 remedial English classes for 25 Jenin refugee camp youth and two English language classes for an unspecified number of Shufat camp youth, hiring part-time instructors (see para 15 for staff qualifications.) SOP has left the design of other activities to its new staff members. The staffer in charge of the West Bank outreach program was formerly a head counselor at SOP's Maine Camp, and has attempted to retain a co-existence focus to his programming, working with the Ramallah-based Ta'awon Palestinian Conflict Resolution Institute to schedule two workshops in Ramallah with PRM funding designed to promote communication skills

and "self-confidence." SOP's Jerusalem program staffer also conducted one three-day communications workshop for refugee youth in April, but has also agreed to provide adult English language courses and summer camp/lifeguard services suggested by the UNRWA Women's Program Center in Shufat Camp, apparently as part of an agreement she reached to run SOP's camp outreach program from this women's center.

ISSUES AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION

18. (SBU) MANAGEMENT TURNOVER: SOP is undergoing a protracted management turnover in its Jerusalem offices that is affecting its PRM-funded activities. When SOP dismissed Jerusalem Center Director Jen Marlowe (the architect of SOP's original grant proposal) in mid-2004, reportedly to respond to allegations that Co-Existence Center staff were introducing biased programming, it brought in Tim Wilson (long-standing director of SOP's summer camp facility in Otisfield, Maine) in September to serve on an interim basis. Wilson told refcoord in January that he had begun to re-orient SOP's traditional regional programming from joint dialogue sessions/academic seminars to "Peace Corps-type" community based service activities demanded by former campers, arguing that this would help SOP address the severe problem it faces in meeting its goal of retaining the participation of former campers in SOP activities until they reach age 24 (ref B).

19. (SBU) Wilson's subsequent five-month absence from the region, however, has forced comparatively inexperienced staff to design and implement SOP's two PRM-funded ongoing subprograms: the development of Arabic language materials and courses designed to ensure refugees participate in ongoing co-existence courses. Acting Director Huler maintains regular contact with SOP HQ and has been extremely responsive to refcoord requests for updates on SOP's programs, but has a "hands off" management style, meeting with staff responsible for PRM-funded programming once every two weeks. With only two years at SOP, he appears reluctant to offer former colleagues guidance on the content of their new activities and has not met with UNRWA officials to coordinate SOP's new camp-based programming, despite repeated urging from refcoord. The new local staff SOP has hired to develop its refugee camp community service programs, particularly the SOP staff member in charge of its Jerusalem program, are turning to the UNRWA community-based organizations and NGOs in Shufat and Ramallah that have agreed to house their refugee camp outreach programs for programming suggestions. This has diluted the content of SOP's co-existence content to date, and could result in SOP duplicating services that other NGOs can provide. It also increases the risk SOP will inadvertently align itself with a politicized group. (NOTE: SOP staff's lack of lack of familiarity with the political factions operating in camps in Bethlehem forced SOP to abandon its community service program in 2003 (ref D). END NOTE.)

110. (SBU) TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS: SOP Jerusalem staff report that they are having more difficulty obtaining the Israeli travel permits Palestinian youth need to travel to SOP's workshops and seminars. SOP is aware that the completion of the security barrier around Jerusalem will exacerbate the problems it is having maintaining its East Jerusalem Co-Existence Center as a seminar site, and is considering opening a satellite office in Ramallah in response. To reduce staff travel, SOP has already provided housing in Ramallah for its staff member responsible for implementing its trial West Bank refugee camp outreach program using non-PRM funding.

ACCESS AND COORDINATION ISSUES

111. (SBU) SOP has traditionally relied on regional governments to help it identify its summer camp participants. While SOP has restored the PA's participation, UNRWA continues to have no role in SOP selection processes. UNRWA's absence from SOP selection committees probably

limits ability to identify program beneficiaries, given that the majority of SOP's target population attends UNRWA schools. (NOTE: SOP claims to have invited local UNRWA West Bank staff to participate in its selection committees in the past, but it has not yet approached education program managers from UNRWA HQ, nor its West Bank and Gaza Field offices. END NOTE.)

112. (SBU) Lack of coordination in the field, and potential overlap with UNRWA's own tolerance program, is a growing issue. SOP managers have not met with officials from UNRWA's HQ or West Bank Field to discuss their new refugee camp service programs, despite the fact that SOP has located its Jerusalem program in an UNRWA community based organization in Shufat Camp (with the approval of UNRWA's Shufat Camp Director) and hopes to expand activities to other UNRWA-run West Bank camps. UNRWA West Bank Field Director Anders Fange told refcoord June 14 that this coordination gap would not lead UNRWA to limit SOP's access. However, SOP's strategy of aligning itself with local NGOs/UNRWA community service groups already working in or near UNRWA camps to gain access/facilities puts it at risk of serving as adjunct staff for those organizations. There is also strong potential overlap between SOP's effort to produce Arabic materials and the phase II tolerance project UNRWA's Education Department has just started to implement, which is partially designed to expand the conflict-resolution teaching materials it has already started introducing in its West Bank and Gaza schools.

SELECTION CRITERIA

113. (SBU) SOP continues to use English language skills, academic excellence, and demonstrated leadership and social skills as selection criteria for its summer camp program. SOP staff readily admit that their heavy reliance on English language ability inadvertently led them to target wealthy Palestinians during the PA boycott of its program, relying on private schools with strong English language programs, such as Al Quds University to identify potential participants for the past three years. However, they are consciously working to target low-income youth. SOP has done a good job establishing gender balance in its summer camp caseload; 51 percent of its past summer camp participants have been male and 49 percent female. However, SOP's ability to target refugees in its follow-on programming is limited by its own record keeping: SOP's database does not identify the refugee status of its former summer campers. SOP actively involves former campers its programming decisions.

SPHERE STANDARDS AND CODES OF CONDUCT

114. (U) Seeds of Peace does not use SPHERE standards to design its programming, but is willing to do so if requested. SOP has a Code of Conduct and advises project staff of their obligations to report any suspected sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries by its facilitators and escorts. No such cases were reported as of July 21.

STAFFING, WORKPLACE CONDITIONS AND CONTROLS

115. (SBU) STAFFING: Seeds of Peace currently has four full-time employees working on its three PRM-funded sub-programs on a part-time basis. (NOTE: SOP does not use PRM funding to support its full-time staff, but has hired two part-time English teachers with BA-level credentials and has compensated several workshop leaders to implement its refugee camp outreach program. END NOTE.) Staff work five days per week. Center Supervisor/camp recruitment program manager Al Jundi and Olive Branch Editor Wilkis are based at the Jerusalem Center full-time. SOP's two refugee camp outreach program staff spend one day per week at the Jerusalem Center and the remaining four days working out of the Shufat Camp Women's Program Center or the apartment SOP rents in Ramallah. Al Jundi appeared fully and

gainfully employed during refcoord's monitoring visits. Wilkis was absent on two occasions. Refcoord was unable to conduct site visits to SOP's Shufat and Ramallah programs. The qualifications of SOP staff are mixed. Al Jundi is a long-time Jerusalem Center staffer who has conducted summer camp recruitment for SOP for over five years. SOP's new Ramallah-based staff member, a former head counselor at SOP's Maine Camp who holds a BA degree from Earlham College, appears cognizant of the political dynamics of refugee camps. However, SOP's new Jerusalem program officer has no prior experience working with Palestinian refugees. Olive Branch Editor Seth Wilkis, who has been responsible for implementing SOP's PRM-funded Arabic translations since October 2003, is not fluent in Arabic, forcing SOP to rely on out-sourcing or volunteer former campers.

16. (U) OFFICES AND EQUIPMENT: SOP established its Jerusalem Center for Co-Existence in 1999 to provide office space and a meeting site for the follow-up activities it organizes for Palestinian-Israeli camp graduates. The Center is located in a clean and spacious private four-floor house in the French Hill area of East Jerusalem and was being used both as office space and a workshop/seminar site for former campers resident in Jerusalem during refcoord's monitoring visits. Office equipment appeared in good working condition, but was not purchased with PRM funding. SOP has not used any PRM funding to equip the Ramallah apartment its West Bank refugee camp community service program director works out of four days per week.

17. (SBU) FINANCIAL CONTROLS: SOP's finances are handled by its Maine offices, but it employs a part-time accountant in Jerusalem and appears to have appropriate financial reporting and inventory controls.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

18. (SBU) SOP's Jerusalem Center currently has the technical capacity to maintain Palestinian refugee youth targeting in its summer camp recruitment efforts, although it would probably need to establish a working relationship with UNRWA to improve its access and ensure refugee status remains one of its program criteria. It is unlikely that SOP would be capable of targeting refugees in its follow-on programming without external assistance, particularly if SOP continues to maintain a database that fails to track the refugee status of its former campers. SOP does not currently have the capacity to carry out in-house Arabic translation activities: it lacks editorial staff fluent in Arabic.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

19. (C) Refcoord has reviewed the new \$100,000 project proposal SOP submitted to the Department on July 22 which asks PRM to continue supporting the same three activities it implemented this year (i.e., recruiting refugees for its summer camp, implementing community service programs in UNRWA refugee camps, and producing Arabic language tolerance materials). Given that funding for NGOs is limited and that SOP has struggled to fully implement the two year-round components in its current agreement, refcoord recommends that PRM consider scaling back future agreements to support SOP's effort to recruit more refugees to participate in its summer camp in Maine. The new refugee camp-based activities that are now the focus of SOP's attempt to include refugees in its year-round programming may facilitate SOP's summer camp recruitment efforts, but its reliance on UNRWA and other local NGOs to secure access has diluted the conflict-resolution focus of its year-round program. In some instances, the activities SOP is undertaking in UNRWA refugee camps appear to primarily serve to rehabilitate SOP's reputation as an "American NGO." In addition, PRM has recently agreed to fund a phase II tolerance project that may make SOP's publishing activities redundant. That said, UNRWA wants to introduce new activities under its phase II tolerance

project, such as establishing summer camps in its West Bank schools, that could probably be implemented effectively by SOP. If SOP were willing to revise its proposal/approach to year-round refugee programming, UNRWA Education Program Director Kabir Shaikh has indicated that he would be willing to work with SOP as an implementing partner. This partnership would provide SOP with the strong managerial oversight and broad access to refugee camps that it currently lacks, and would maintain its tolerance and co-existence focus. Refcoord does not support funding SOP's Arabic language program for a third year. Apart from duplicating texts UNRWA has in production, SOP has done little work to distribute its publications outside UNRWA schools, and has no current plan to hire Arabic-speaking editors or translators that would reduce its dependence on expensive out-sourcing.

HENZEL